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ERRATA.

Page 6, line 5, for prosecuted, read persecuted.

Page 16, line 18, for some, read those.

Page 84, lines 13 and 14, for a female, read females.



P R E F A C E.

THE following Tract being calculated for the Use of the *Patient*, and not of the *Physician*, *abstruse Ideas*, and *technical Terms*, are avoided as much as possible. Nor does the Author affect *Elegance of Style*; the Reader's *Benefit*, and not his *Amusement*, being the sole Object of this Publication.

No Name, he thinks, will be looked for to so minute a Performance: He hopes the Criticks will judge it below their Notice; but if any of the *Physical Tribe* should esteem the

Honour

vi P R E F A C E.

Honour of the Profession concerned, and condescend to animadvert upon this little Piece, the Writer frankly confesses that he shall rejoice in having concealed his Name; for although he glories in the Uprightness of his Intention, it will yet be a secret Comfort to him, not to have so staked his Reputation, as to be under the Necessity of defending it: In truth, he is much too indolent, and has too great an Aversion to *all* Controversial Writings, ever to become the Author of *any*.

STRICTURES

S T R I C T U R E S

ON THE

Present Practice of Physick, &c.

THE Practice of Physick in this Island has, for a long series of years, been in the hands of men, perhaps, as a *Body*, the most learned in the universe; and yet it is too manifest, that the improvements made in this Science, bear no proportion to the means seemingly employed for that end, and the encouragement

agement given to so necessary a study. Surgery, indeed, has made a rapid progress; but Physick has by no means kept pace with it: and it must be granted by every candid observer, that many of the most efficacious Remedies in ordinary use—those “*Graces snatch’d, beyond the reach of Art*”—are not only the offspring of *Quackery*, considered as opposed to *regular Practice*, but unfortunately are too often rejected as such, by the Faculty, with the greatest contempt, notwithstanding the most indubitable proofs of their success daily obtrude themselves on our notice; a circumstance which points out, in some measure, the cause why Physick hath

hath so little to boast of. Besides which, it is with Science as with Trade; both thrive best where most at liberty: And although some regulations may be necessary in each, yet they should be as few as possible, and leading rather than restrictive. Combinations, monopolies, systems, and a multiplicity of unnecessary rules and objections, must ever encumber them and retard their progress. The very language of a neighbour nation hath been thought to suffer under the curb of an academy, as the speed of their horses is lessened in the manage.

B WHEN

WHEN we consider that no Medicine is ordered by the Physician, but under his hand ; that it is afterwards made up by the Apothecary, and the prescription filed as it were on record ; the method may, at first glance, appear well calculated for the preservation of our lives : It is, undoubtedly, some security against our being made the subject of bold experiments, and some (to say truth, very, very little) against the arts of the wicked and designing ; but has it not, at the same time, introduced a mischief of consequence infinitely greater ? Has it not destroyed hundreds where it has saved one ? Is not the Physician himself (especially in country practice)

rice) often deceived, and the Patient injured, by bad drugs and base substitutions ? Is not the Prescriber, and the Medicine too, by these means hurt in reputation ; and what might possibly be the basis of farther improvements, itself disused and forgot ? The principal grievance, however, is, that while Physick continues in the trammels ; while the reputation of the Physician is so tender and chaste ; while it is daily pledged in every Apothecary's shop, and submitted to publick trial ; there is much danger of losing *old* Remedies, and little probability of gaining *new*. The Science of Physick is treated as a System ; it is looked for in Books

rather than in Nature : Former errors are taken up, unexamined, and propagated in the lump ; while any material deviation from received practice, is a heresy prosecuted with as much zeal, by the old orthodox, as heresy in Religion.

THE absurdity and evil tendency of this must be manifest, when we consider that Physick is divided into two distinct offices ; one consists in investigating the seat, the cause, and nature of a Distemper, the other in the application of a Remedy. The first is founded partly on reason, partly on experience. Reflection and argument may have a great share in finding

finding out the Nature of a Disorder, but will go a very little way in tracing a Cure. The internal texture and properties of Medicines, on which their efficacy entirely depends, are so little known, so little the object of sense and reason, that experience is the only sure guide. From accidental discoveries, and experience, is derived the little that is already known of the *poteftates Herbarum*, &c. from the same source alone are we to look for farther improvements: To shut a door against experience, is to put out one of the eyes of Physick; no wonder, then, that this Science, instead of advancing, is rather retrograde. Whim, prejudice, fashion, and accident,

dent, have consigned many valuable Medicines to oblivion ; and to introduce new ones might seem utterly impossible, but from the friendly intrusions of *Quackery*, and the irresistible force of conviction attending long and successful, although *irregular Practice* ; a conviction which reaches the Physician last of any, when for his own true interest, and that of mankind, *he* should be the first to feel it's force.

I would beg leave to mention a few Instances, in support of my assertions. The Small-Pox, Bilious Disorders, and Acute Fevers, perhaps take off more of the inhabitants of this
Isle,

Ifle, than all other complaints united. Now the Small-Pox, although so long experienced among us, so frequent and so fatal, may be said, till within these few years, not so properly to have been *little understood*, as to have been grossly *misunderstood*. Every one thirty or forty years old must remember when this distemper, with a kind of superstitious ignorance, was divided into the 7th, the 9th, the 11th, the 13th day sort, and so on to about the 21st or 23d; a bad sort was supposed, for the most part, to be propagated from a bad, and a good sort from a good, as tares and wheat, from their respective *seed*, without regard to the *soil*. And least the errors rela-
 tive

tive to this disorder should be *consistent*, a notion at the same time prevailed, even among the greater part of the Faculty, that this distemper was sometimes of *equivocal origin*; that it might be bred, in this or any other climate, without contact or communication with the diseased, and had frequently proceeded merely from sudden fright.—But however the disorder was thought to begin, the patient was kept in a close and hot room; strong Wheys, even Hartshorn, Sal Volatile, and other Alcalis, were frequently administered, to expel the Matter, as it was called; Butter (especially where the throat was much affected) considered as a proper vehicle

hicle for food; and White Meat, Eggs, and Broth, no way objected to.

THANKS to the rashness of Empiricks, these notions, and these practices, have of late years lost ground, as fast as pride, shame, envy, and a fondness for old opinions, would permit.

THAT the general ideas entertained of the Small-Pox, and the methods of treating it, were for the most part such as here represented, cannot be denied; and *regular Practice* hath been obliged to capitulate with the *irregular*, and with indifferent grace to make some submissions, Close

C rooms

rooms have been suddenly and universally condemned; not, it seems, from any thing *Sutton* has said or done, but his success occasioned the Faculty to consult an ancient oracle of their own, (Dr. Sydenham) who boldly ventured to recommend the cool regimen, although no one till of late years had been happy enough to follow his advice. To avoid the imputation of ignorance, the excuse is, “ We all, long ago, knew the excellency of a cool regimen; Dr. Sydenham pointed it out years before these modern pretenders were born; but our reputations are of so tender a nature, that no one dared to introduce such an innovation.”

I LEAVE

I LEAVE the Reader to make his own reflections; I would only observe, that the Faculty could not give the Doctor absolute credit for what he recommended; they much doubted the success, or the hazard of reputation would have been out of the case.

Now, although, certainly, the abandoning this single error has been the saving of thousands, the excellency of Sutton's practice is by no means confined to this article; it was necessary for the security of his patients, and consequently for his own emolument, to publish a long catalogue of things till his time permitted

in the diet of persons under the Small-Pox, and many of them *advised* as proper, if not necessary, which are now incontestibly proved to be of the most fatal consequence. Some of these have been already mentioned; the rest are easily learned, having been so frequently published, as well by Sutton himself, as by Smiths, Shoemakers, and Old Women; who, merely by attending to so much of Sutton's method as could not be kept secret, have gone on with surprising success.—The effect of his *Pill* is so salutary and surprising, that the purchase of the secret (if he will part with it) would do more benefit to mankind, and more honour to Parliament,

liament, than any purchase of that kind yet made.

HOWEVER, if we have not so good a Compass to steer by as Sutton, he has at least given us a Chart of the Rocks and Shoals on which millions have been lost, and directed us, in many instances, what to *pursue*, as well as what to *avoid*.

AND here it would be an injustice, not to acknowledge some thanks due to one of the Legitimate Sons of Esculapius ; an injustice, nevertheless, confined to *Dr. Dimisdale* in particular ; the Faculty at large can claim no merit from his happy successes.

BUT

BUT although, in regard to the Small-Pox, they cannot claim the *lead*; it is some little merit to have partly adopted the improvements others have made, and not to have obstinately rejected them in the gross.

HAPPY for the world, if as much could be said in respect to Bilious Complaints, Acute Fevers, and some other Distempers. But here the interest of the Physician and Apothecary are so closely connected in opposing the use of *James's Powder*, that we must despair of ever seeing the benefit of it extended to the utmost; all we can hope for is, that some Apothecaries,

thecaries, who do not chuse to avow it's merit openly, will yet privately administer it; at least, after having filled their patient's window with phials and gallipots. Some few (to their honour be it spoken) have avowed it's excellency, and honestly administer it in the first instance; but these are thinly scattered. Ask nine out of ten, among the Regular Practitioners, what James's Powder is composed of, their answer is, "It is no mystery, no new discovery:" And some will even hazard the mention of particulars. Ask why they don't use it, the answer is, "We never use a Medicine the ingredients of which are not publickly known, and whose effects

effects are uncertain.” How consistent these answers are, how ingenuous, and how reasonable, let every one judge.—What relates to the *uncertainty* of it’s effects, will be spoken to below.

To enter minutely into the excellency of this Medicine, is not my design ; it would take whole volumes, to communicate the variety of surprising cures effected by it under my own observation. For the good of mankind, and to obviate the base and ungenerous methods taken to terrify us from the use of this Powder, it will be worth while to touch on some of it’s general properties, which the
 writer,

writer, from his own repeated experience, can prove and support against all opposition.

To get a clear knowledge of the patient's case, is very justly said to be the most difficult and material office of a Physician; to mistake it, is too often joining the enemy, and fighting on the wrong side. Now, the divine Remedy under consideration, if not the *only one* which points out the disorder, as well as administers a cure, certainly does it in the most eminent degree, and far beyond any other medicine whatever. The *variety* of it's effects, (invidiously stiled the *uncertainty* of them, and so confidently

D objected

objected to) is that in which it's superior excellency greatly lies. Without this property, it would, like most other medicines, be a dangerous, two-edged weapon, as likely, in the hands of the unskilful, to cut the wrong way as the right ; but I have known the Powder here spoken of, in many hundred instances, where other Medicines have been very much misapplied, at once point out the mistake, and shew the true seat and nature of the complaint. If the Disorder be entirely owing to a Stoppage of Perspiration, it operates only as a Sweat ; if it be in the Stomach, as a Vomit ; if in the Intestines, as a Purge : If the Disorder be complicated, the effect

fect of the Medicine is complicated likewise, and exactly proportioned to the resistance it meets with. Two or three grains will often have a considerable effect, where they encounter much peccant matter or obstruction; whereas ten or twelve grains (as I have frequently experienced on myself) will have no visible effect on a body perfectly in health. Hence arises another security in the use of this Medicine beyond most others, that there is no very great precision requisite in proportioning the quantity; and where given in a disorder not a proper subject for it, it remains perfectly neuter; and never

(within my experience, at least) once militated on the wrong side.

IN *Bilious Complaints*, and where the *Stomach* was notoriously the seat of the Disorder, I have known the several Vomits in ordinary practice applied; they have, indeed, *seemingly* cleared the stomach, even with violence, yet without any salutary effect; immediately, on recourse had to James's Powder, the Bilious Matter has been *visibly* expelled, of a different colour and nature from every thing brought up before, and the patient instantly and totally relieved.

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As to *Acute Fevers*, I have only to say, that in numberless instances I have known the patient in a few hours put absolutely out of all danger, even after the most alarming symptoms brought on by long neglect, or the application of improper medicines ; nor ever knew them fail, except in one instance, where there manifestly was not life and strength enough left for any medicine to operate upon, and where the Powder was administered as a mere forlorn hope, for the satisfaction of disconsolate friends who had unfortunately let slip the precious moment.

AND

AND as this Medicine, operating by way of *Emetick*, frequently, if not constantly, exceeds all other Emetics; so, when it operates as a *Sweat*, it differs from most others, in that, instead of weakening, it generally leaves the Patient stronger than before. In Acute Fevers I remember not a few instances, where the Patient has been brought so low, that the very weight of the bed-clothes has been an intolerable burden; yet, in two hours, sometimes much less, after taking James's Powder, and profusely sweating, he has found himself so strong as to entreat permission to get up and have the bed made; and has even been impatient for food, the surest symptom

symptom that nature gives of a Fever subdued.

BUT it hath pleased GOD to take the Author of this invaluable blessing, this happy instrument of his mercy, to himself; and as Envy is more like the Hawk than the Vulture, as she delights to prey on the living rather than the dead, her snakes seem already to have dropped their crests, and to hiss with abated fury; already has the use of this Powder been cautiously adopted by several Physicians, and we may hope to see it daily extended.

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THE *Rheumatism*, likewise, although a most excruciating malady, and to which mankind are universally subject, is yet one of those for which *regular Practice* does not yet possess a remedy of any reputation, or that can with any degree of confidence be relied on: And this is the more to be regretted, as the Distemper is not the proper effect of vicious habits, of improper indulgence, nor of simple chance; but, too often, at once the offspring and destroyer of honest industry, and the parent of poverty and ruin!—I have, however, known many instances, where *James's Powder* has worked miraculous cures in this complaint; and have met also, in private hands,

hands, with some other Remedies for it of very great efficacy.

IN regard to the *King's Evil*, the Faculty having for ages confessed it's ignorance of a cure, Superstition took advantage of it, and usurped the seat of Science, even in a Protestant country, and an enlightened age; but fortunately she is now dethroned, and from the obscurest corners we are furnished with infallible Remedies, which, yet, from prejudice, are but little known.

To affirm that any thing, not naturally impossible, has never been effected, may be too bold; but I can

E truly

truly say, I never knew or heard of a *confirmed Dropsy* cured by a *regular Practiser* in either branch of Physick : At the same time, I can witness, that several most inveterate ones were radically cured by the late Dr. Ward, even after tapping, and in the last stage ; and we have been lately flattered with great promises, from the effects of Tobacco-ashes. May the farther experience of them enlarge our reasonable expectations ! and may the blessing be universally diffused ! I fear, however, the College will be the last to assist in so laudable a work ; not from any ungenerous motive—God forbid !—but from too strict an adherence to musty rules ;

and

and from the want of a certain degree of suppleness and complacency, without which the most commendable innovations are sure to meet with discouragement.

IN *Canine Madness*, that most dreadful of all disorders, mankind finding no relief from professional Skill, have fled for succour to unlettered Experience and Tradition, from whence never-failing Remedies have been procured. Myself can attest the infallibility of an Old Woman's Medicine, from it's success in an hundred instances, without a single miscarriage. The Lancashire, Lincolnshire, and Tonquin Recipes, will

maintain each it's own Reputation, against any thing but folly and prejudice.

AND here it is impossible not to take notice of an ungenerous attempt made in the St. James's Chronicle, about the end of 1776, or beginning of 1777, by one of the *regular Tribe*, to rob mankind of the comfort and security of the Ormskirk or Lancashire Medicine. It would be tedious to repeat particulars, but the case was shortly this :

Two persons, a man and his maid, are bit at the same time, by the same cat ; they take the Lancashire

shire Medicine: One recovers, the other dies; but not till after he had long lingered under the hands of the person who so kindly obliges the world with the relation; and who, during his whole attendance, seemed rather looking for Experience than exercising his Skill: Indeed, it does not appear that the Doctor pretended to any knowledge in that particular disorder. From the time that passed between the bite and the first symptoms, and from other circumstances, it is highly probable that the Ormskirk Medicine had a very considerable effect; and it is much to be regretted that it was not properly repeated and pursued, or some other Medicine of
repute

repute applied. But it was the man's destiny to die; and the Doctor thought it a duty incumbent on him, to shew mankind how little dependence is to be had on the Remedy to which his Patient had trusted.

Yet what does all this amount to? If the maid-servant, bit in the manner there mentioned, recovered, it is a convincing proof that the Medicine is very powerful and efficacious; no one in his senses can suppose she would have lived without it: That the master died, after having taken the same Medicine, only proves, either that he did not take enough, or was guilty of some indiscreet action or omission
which

which defeated it's design; or perhaps the nature of his wound, or the particularity of his constitution, might render the cure more difficult than common, and make larger doses, or a more frequent repetition, necessary. But, granting the whole case taken together should prove that the Medicine sometimes succeeds, and sometimes fails; is it generous, is it not cruel, to deter mankind from the *probable chance* of a cure, because they cannot have a *certainty*? Had the Doctor proposed a better Remedy in it's stead, he might have been excusable; but, as that was not the case, I trust we shall not suffer ourselves, upon one doubtful and flimsy piece of evidence,

evidence, to be reasoned out of a Remedy whose reputation has stood the test of long experience; and, I doubt not, will prove too hard for the tooth of Envy.

BUT however improbable in speculation, yet as in practice it is evidently no easy task to persuade mankind, even where life is concerned, to seek a Remedy that requires time and trouble to procure, I will beg leave to mention one that is always at hand, and which I had from a Dog Doctor who had thereby prevented Canine Madness in himself above forty times, and then bore many scars of mad bites on both his hands. It is no more
than

than to wash the wound as soon as possible with *Salt* and *Water*; then to bind on as much *Salt*, *pounded* and *moistened*, as will conveniently lie upon the part, and leave it there as long as it's corrosiveness will well permit; after which the wound should be well cleansed, and not healed too soon. About half a pint of water, made very salt, should be taken at the same time, and repeated twice a day, for about three or four days.

ALTHOUGH this hath never been known to fail, yet, as the disorder is of so dreadful a nature, the party would do well to apply some of the
 F. other

other remedies here mentioned, as soon as they can be procured.

It has been observed, that wounds given by mad animals in the head, are more dangerous than those in any other part ; such wounds, therefore, should be particularly well searched with Salt, whatever medicine the patient may think proper to take inwardly.

NOTWITHSTANDING this Salt Regimen may seem to countenance the practice of Bathing in the Sea for Canine Madness, yet it is certain that nothing hath occasioned the loss of more persons by this disorder, than
trusting

trusting implicitly to Sea Bathing. Before this can be procured, the poison has generally too much time to work into the blood; the water, if *immediately* applied, is scarce salt enough in itself; and, running directly from the wound, has no opportunity to corrode and penetrate.

HAVING said thus much concerning several disorders which are in their own nature, for the most part, unavoidable, the effect of constitution, accident, and little inadvertencies, that call rather for compassion than blame, I will now offer a few words of advice in respect to a distemper which, I will be bold to say, is solely the

consequence of our own folly; although, ten to one, the reader will condemn me, possibly shut up the book, and take his leave, before he has read two pages farther; but if I can win but one in a thousand over to his own interest, I shall think my labour well bestowed.

THE distemper I mean is no other than the *Gout*; a distemper so intimately connected with most of the best families in the kingdom, that it must be touched with the greatest tenderness and respect. For this same reason it might be expected, that if any one disease were more peculiarly the object of *regular Practice*, than
another,

another, this would be it; for where could the Physician hope for so rich a harvest? Yet what is the result of all his study and experience in this matter? His advice usually amounts to no more than this: “ Let Nature
 “ take her course; by no means ven-
 “ ture upon the bold and dangerous
 “ Nostrums of Empiricks: Patience
 “ and Flannel will do great things,
 “ and little else can be safely at-
 “ tempted.” In short, this disorder, contrary to what might reasonably be expected, instead of proving a fair field, yielding the Faculty a luxuriant crop, is totally abandoned by them, as sterile and hopeless: Unhappily, they have not only deserted the culti-
 vation

vation of it themselves ; but, from a motive of conduct too common, oppose with virulence the honest and laudable endeavours of others.

HERE the reader will necessarily recollect the fate of poor Dr. Le Febvre, or, as he was usually called, Le Fievre: I never saw the Doctor, to my knowledge, and therefore cannot be supposed interested in his good or ill fortune ; but having seen several of his patients, and read the testimonies of many more, concerning the effect of his Powder on themselves respectively, it is matter of astonishment that the gouty world should suffer so promising a medicine to be maliciously

maliciously hooted out of use. If nineteen out of twenty received considerable benefit; if some few, more prudent in their regimen during the operation of the Powder, and in their manner of living since, are so happy as to be at this day glaring proofs of its excellence, what but an unhappy fatality (perhaps a just punishment for intemperance and obstinacy) could drive the Doctor and his nostrum out of the kingdom, with every mark of disgrace, and even of resentment! Some few of his patients, indeed, evidently mistook their case, the disorder not being the Gout, consequently they received no benefit; on this, say his enemies, “ *the powder is*
“ *mere*

“ *mere powder of pest.*” Another patient, long after leaving off the Powder, having without intermission continued the same course of life and diet by which the disorder was first generated, and therefore not being so fortunate as to get rid of it; or having, perhaps, more properly, produced it *anew*, in a severe fit took a very violent and improper medicine, which brought on almost instant death; therefore, said the Doctor’s enemies in triumph, without regard to time and circumstances, “ *the Powder is of a violent and dangerous nature.*” Nothing, in short, is too absurd or inconsistent for malice to invent, and folly to believe. The Doctor was
 fortunate

fortunate only in one particular; that out of so great a number of patients, some aged, some worn out with intemperance and disease, and almost all in a state of decrepitude, and pursuing the same line of conduct which brought on their complaints, no one happened, either naturally or accidentally, to die during the course of the medicine, or in a reasonable time after, so as to give a fair handle to charge Le Fievre with the murder; the instance already mentioned (such as it is) being the only weapon his adversaries could lay hold of; and as this was so greedily caught at, it is evident how little mercy would have been shewn him, had only three or

four patients died so soon as, according to the course of nature, and other circumstances, might have been expected.

BUT although there is great reason to think that Le Fievre's Powder, had it experienced a fair and candid trial, would have proved the readiest and safest, if not the only effectual medicine hitherto in general use for expelling, or rather, (as is more probable) neutralizing and correcting the gouty matter already lodged in the body; yet much the greater part of those who took it, utterly mistaking the cause of the disorder, set out with an idea that the Powder was not only
to

to cure them of their *present* Gout, but that it was likewise to destroy the very *seeds* of the distemper, as they were absurdly called, and prevent all possibility of return. The Doctor, himself, it is to be feared, was not sufficiently open and ingenuous to give this flattering notion a proper check: Besides which, he treated all degrees and stages of the Gout precisely in the same manner, and trusted implicitly to a single course, or rather a certain number of courses, as he called them. This unhappy notion, and this implicit confidence in a fixed quantity of his Powder, were the rocks on which the health of his patients, and his own reputation, split

and were lost. A Surgeon may as well pretend to set a broken limb so as it shall never be broken again, as a Physician to cure a distemper so as it shall never return; particularly if founded on intemperance. It is true, many diseases are of such a nature, that we are liable to them but once; this is, however, a wonderful ordinance of Providence, a secret property in the disorders themselves, not the effect of medicine or art; nor hath the reason of it yet fallen within the reach of human science.

NOTWITHSTANDING the encomiums here bestowed on Le Fievre's Powder, one principal design of these sheets is,

is, to induce those who are interested in the subject, not to trust absolutely to any medicine whatever ; on the contrary, to rest assured, that the cure of the Gout is not necessarily or properly the object of Physick ; but may be attained, for the most part, by barely abstaining from things hurtful, and using proper exercise, as the party becomes more and more able ; in short, by treading back the path which led to the distemper. Le Fievre's Powder would, undoubtedly, be a very good foundation to begin with, and very much hasten the cure. In cases where a patient is very old, or the disorder very inveterate, there possibly may not be length of life, and

and strength of constitution, sufficient for conquering it, in the slow and regular method of abstinence; and here such assistance from medicine may be particularly adviseable; but, in all common cases, the cure may be effected by *abstinence from pernicious liquors*, and *by exercise*; circumstances which, in the luxurious and indolent, will perhaps require a more firm and manly resolution, than a course of the most nauseous Physick.

WHAT follows, touching the origin and cure of the Gout, it is hoped will not be unacceptable; it is the result of experiments, which, when properly matured, and reduced to form,

form, shall be the subject of a future publication; what is now offered being only a prelude to a more extensive undertaking, a warning sent before, in hope that the pains of some few sufferers, at least, may in the mean time be alleviated, and some, already in the path that leads to this horrid disorder, happily diverted from it. Possibly accident may prevent what is intended to follow; and the writer is desirous, while it is yet in his power, to throw his mite into the publick treasury. The difficulty, however, of removing old-rooted prejudices is such, that (as was before hinted) all he dares hope for is, to convince a
small

small proportion of his readers; and, in so doing, he will have his reward.

THESE prejudices have been owing to a love for old habits; to artful and to ignorant misrepresentations; to hasty credit given to ill-attested facts, and to wrong conclusions drawn from those that are true.

THE grand fundamental mistake is, that the Gout is *hereditary*. I will not ask whether, if the Gout be hereditary, it descended to us from our first parents? If not, when, where, and how it first began? Because these questions might as properly be asked in respect to other distempers that are undoubtedly

undoubtedly in some measure hereditary : But if the Gout be, like those other distempers, congenial with our nature, if it be of seminal growth, why is it not common (like other disorders not merely the effect of habit) to every *class* in every *part* of the *globe*? Why are *whole nations* absolute strangers to it? Why among the English, the most gouty of all people, is nearly one-third of the *gentry*, who live to forty or fifty, afflicted with this complaint, while not one in ten thousand of the *labouring poor* ever experience it? In this land of trade, liberty and luxury, where property is so fluctuating, and families so suddenly raised and sunk ; where

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the blood of the patrician and plebeian is so intimately mixed and incorporated, why are not our hospitals and alms-houses filled by this disorder? Why have many thousand children of the most gouty parents lived to a very advanced age, and died without ever feeling the least symptoms of it? Why, on the contrary, do we daily see some grievously afflicted with it early in life, whose parents, still living, have never had it at all? But, as each parent taken singly is but of the *half* blood with the children, to set the case in a stronger light, I would ask, why it frequently happens, even among those of the *whole* blood, that one son has
the

the Gout to a violent degree, while another (perhaps older by many years) is entirely free? and why, is often, have all the sons the Gout, while all the daughters escape? The answer to such questions (when any answer is attempted) usually is, the difference in constitution, in diet and exercise, makes every other difference. Is not this giving up the contest? Is it not granting all that is asked? Is it not deserting to the enemy, and calling upon Intemperance to father this bantling of spurious and obscure generation? On the other hand, although every individual in a family, for ten successions together, has died a martyr to the Gout, this is

no *conclusive proof* that it is hereditary, while the same means by which the *first* generation procured it have lain open to all the *succeeding* ones; nor does it afford even a *reasonable* or *presumptive proof*, while there is such an over-balance of evidence and argument on the other side.

BUT the advocates for hereditary Gouts produce an instance, a singular and wonderful one, of a child actually born with chalk stones, and every other symptom of an inveterate Gout. Admitting the fact, what does it prove? We are investigating the course of *Nature*, and our arguments are to be drawn from *Monsters*! In-
stead

stead of *one* example, there are *hundreds* where children have been born perfectly rotten with the Venereal Disease; is this distemper, therefore, to be classed among the hereditary? and are the sins of the father to be visited on the children to the hundredth generation?

NOTHING is more common, nothing more dangerous to the cause of truth, than thus drawing *general rules* from *particular examples*. I have heard two or three instances where the Small-Pox has been twice experienced by the same person, or thought to be so, and that in the natural way; surely it is more rational to suppose, that either
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in the first or second instance the disorder was not really the Small-Pox, frequent mistakes of that kind happening; but were it actually so, shall we thence draw a general conclusion, that the Small-Pox is a distemper we may have over and over, and lose that comfort, and even solid security, which arises from the contrary opinion?

HAVING ventured to say what the Gout is *not* owing to, the reader will now expect to be told what it *is* owing to; and I know not how to do it more clearly and concisely, than by first giving him a Receipt, which if he will have resolution implicitly to follow,

low,

low, my life on it, he will have a true, genuine Gout, although there have been no traces of it in his family for fifty generations.

“ Let him take *little or no exercise*; drink plentifully, but not to drunkenness, of punch, light sharp wines, cyders, in short, of any liquor where there is much *spirit* and much *acid united*, whether the spirit be first separated by distillation, and then mixed with the acid, as in punch; or whether the spirit and acid be produced by fermentation, as in wine, &c. for *neither the spirit alone, nor the acid alone, will generate the Gout*: The more *sharp and volatile* the liquor, provided it

it have a sufficient proportion of *spirit*, the more efficacious will it be. Let him continue this course faithfully and regularly for nine or ten months, then may he set up for the Adam of a gouty posterity. If he stick to one particular liquor, and drink no water, tea, small-beer, or other diluters, the effect will be the speedier; and if he be rather in the decline of life, the sooner yet will he succeed."

BUT it must not be supposed that a few months regimen will fix a *permanent Gout*; the malady thus hastily procured, will as hastily evaporate and be gone, unless the same, or a similar

similar regimen be continued; for as it is a guest which comes not but by invitation, so will it stay no longer than while it is kindly entertained; unless where it hath been long cherished, and where the constitution is exceedingly impaired by it, in which case it is generally civil enough to stay with it's host, without farther encouragement, till death parts them.

THE Recipe proceeds on a supposition that the Gout is owing to a predominant acid and spirit, united, insinuating themselves into every part of the body; from the vital warmth of which, and other circumstances, their natural propensity to fermentation

I tion

tion is increased, and they are consequently attended by a flatulency, or confined air. Thus aggrieved Nature, by her known methods of throwing off peccant, foreign, or redundant humours, (but chiefly by perspiration) endeavours *insensibly* to free the body from it's burden. In some, her powers continue ever equal to the task; and the party, although a succession of gouty fluid be constantly passing through him, never experiences a *fit*: In others, the gouty matter being at length urged on the body faster than it can be carried off in a regular, gentle, and quiet manner, the superfluous part of it, close pent in, grows more and more agitated and rarified, till

till Nature, as she does in all cases where she is long counteracted and much obstructed in her usual course, at length, sacrificing ease to necessity, makes a vigorous *effort* to expel the evil; which effort constitutes what is called a *fit* of the Gout.

IMMEDIATELY preceding a *first* fit, it may be presumed that the pores through which the gouty matter hath hitherto been ^{*imperceptibly*} ~~chiefly~~ carried off, are by slow degrees become clogged with an invisible substance, the sluggish *reliquiæ*, the *caput mortuum*, of wine, &c. drank from time to time, whose finer effluvia have long since escaped: In these circumstances the

volatile parts of fresh liquors of the same kind not finding so easy vent as before, accumulate in the body, expand, and make a critical struggle to get free; usually succeeding without much difficulty in the earlier periods of the disease, as there is then, for the most part, great strength of constitution to actuate the muscles, and no very obstinate concretions to oppose.

BUT when the same habit of living is continued, as is generally the case, a greater quantity of foreign matter is collected, the outlets are at the same time more straitened, and the power of expulsion lessened; the attack

tack grows daily stronger, and the defence weaker; the concretions in the pores become in time so accumulated, and so obstinately fixed in those parts where the gouty matter has chiefly attempted to escape, that they grow into *visible* bulk, under the appellation of *chalk stones*. When the matter finds no passage in one part, it flies suddenly to another; by perseverance in ill habits one outlet after another is shut up, the force of the muscles in the meanwhile abates from the wear of time, from the repeated straining efforts of nature to expel a peccant matter, and from indolence and want of resolution in the party to exert the powers that
are

are yet left him. Thus the malady brings him by hasty strides towards his end.

IN the last stage, if Nature have strength sufficient to throw the disorder to the extremities, and there be no passage for it when it arrives there, she will frequently, after repeated efforts in different parts, at length, in a kind of despair, cast it back on the nobler parts, the head or stomach, and the patient probably goes off in an *agony*. If she have not strength to move it to the extremities, the patient not unfrequently goes off in a *lingering lethargic state*, stupid, and insensible of any pain; for pain generally abates

abates in proportion as the powers decay: This sensation, from principles of wisdom and mercy, attending only where the body receives an injury, or when nature is endeavouring to repair it.

OWING to the same *decay in the powers*, it happens that the gouty patient, in advanced stages of the disorder, frequently, for some days preceding a crisis, *feels a torpor, a heaviness, an inclination to sleep, with little or no pain*; sure tokens that nature is much oppressed, and unable as yet to collect her force and expel the enemy. For the same reason, likewise, the fits themselves, towards the
decline

decline of life, grow less and less sharp, till at length they sometimes occasion little more than an *uneasiness*. Often, while the poor patient congratulates himself on the abatement of his anguish, death is stealing upon him, and making sure of his prey.

FROM a review of what has been said, if there be any truth in it, it will appear that every glass of wine, punch, or cyder, that a man drinks, is so much gouty matter lodged in his stomach, a proportion of which probably disperse itself into every part of the human frame: But as the rankest poisons may be given in such degrees as to be perfectly innocent,

or

or even salutary, and thereby reverse their name; so the same liquors, which in excess, and under some circumstances, would give a most inveterate Gout, in a less proportion, and under other circumstances, may be beneficial, particularly in putrid and infectious diseases, to which the gouty are certainly less liable than others, both the spirit and acid being enemies to *putrefaction*. For the same reason, old people are in general less affected by putrid disorders than the young, the acid (*cæteris paribus*) bearing a greater proportion to the alkali, in the former, than in the latter; as is manifest from the quick decay of young animals that are killed

in full health, when compared with the old of the same species, and under the same circumstances. And as the Gout and Putrefaction stand opposed to each other, and weigh in contrary scales, hence arises one, out of several concurring causes, why the Gout, for the most part, makes greater progress in advanced life than in youth.

BUT it will be said, However well this history of the Gout may suit those who have habituated themselves to the liquors mentioned in the Receipt, how are we to account for it in those who have never used such liquors? It is, perhaps, sufficiently shewn,

shewn, why many who *do* drink them have *no sensible Gout*; but how happens it, that some have the Gout who do *not* drink the liquors?

To this I can only say, that if there be any foundation for what has been offered, respecting the origin and progress of the distemper in those who accustom themselves to the liquors objected to, it must appear utterly impossible that any should have it who totally abstain from them, and that all appearances to the contrary are fallacious.

LET us reflect how far the principles before laid down coincide with

our general experience of the malady we are treating of; if they shew clearly why some entire nations, totally unacquainted with the art of distillation, as well as unused to the sharper fermented liquors, have been ever utter strangers to the Gout; if they shew why, among those nations who have been most subject to that disorder, it is chiefly confined to the upper and middle ranks, and little known among the peasantry and labouring people, (except in some instances, taken notice of below;) if they shew why, in the same families, some have the distemper and some escape it; and why it is mostly confined to the middle and later stages of life;

life; all which cannot be accounted for on any other principles; there is then great reason not to trust too implicitly to ill-attested representations, or specious appearances, which may seem to contradict them.

IN many parts of Germany, and almost throughout France, the common beverage of the peasantry consists chiefly of ordinary, thin wines, new and crude, consequently, pretty much charged with the volatile gouty acid; the Gout, therefore, among them, is no very surprizing phænomenon: The many who escape it, are indebted to their moderation in the use of these wines, to their diluting them
plentifully

plentifully with water, (as is, indeed, a very general custom) and to their laborious way of life, some or all of these causes united; the warmth of the climate, too, in the more southern parts, where most wine is drunk, is by no means an inconsiderable discharger of the Gout. In the cyder counties of England, the common people, likewise, put in a modest claim to a small share of so reputable a distemper with their superiors; and pay this *tax*, at least, for their ordinary drink, although they pay not in money. Now and then a fat butler presumes to claim the privilege of the Gout, at the expence and in imitation of his master.

BUT

BUT the most sanguine advocates for *hereditary* Gouts will scarce look for them among the *common people*, as almost every instance of this disorder in *them* is a strong argument against it's being hereditary; and it will be to as little purpose to look there, or any where else, for *constitutional* or *inbred* Gouts, there being no traces of the disorder, either among the rich or poor, but what may be well accounted for, on the hypothesis for which we contend: In short, the thousands who have the Gout, and the hundred thousands who have it not, all conspire to prove, that the malady is a *voluntary acquisition*, it's *essence* a *foreign* and *extrinsic substance*, no nearer related

related to the *human* constitution than to that of the *brute*.

IF the reader be not yet convinced, I have an experiment to offer, which, if fairly made, will put the matter beyond all doubt.—From a tender regard to the honour and dignity of human nature, I had some thoughts of suppressing what follows; but solid advantages must not be sacrificed to empty names.—Let the sceptic, then, take, for instance, a Hog of about two or three years old; confine it in a very close place, so as it can use little or no exercise, for nine, ten, or twelve months; feed it with corn ground fine, and moistened with
wine,

wine, &c. In short, let him treat it, during the whole time, according to the Receipt or Prescription before given for procuring the Gout, as near as the nature of the animal will admit; and, my word for it, he will have a curiosity which, perhaps, will well repay his labour and expence: He may, to the very great entertainment and instruction of the world, introduce to their notice a new personage, in the character of Lord Chalkstone, who will act his part as well as any lord of them all.—

As Montesquieu says, “ I stride
“ away in all haste, lest it should be

L “ thought

“ thought that I am ridiculing the
 “ human race.”—To proceed, then.

WHENEVER I have heard of a Gout not fairly earned by the means abovementioned, I have always been particularly anxious to search into the truth, and never once had reason to doubt my position ; for, on enquiry, it has constantly appeared, either that the party did in fact drink what are here called *gouty Liquors*, under such circumstances, and to such a degree, as well to account for his having the disorder ; or else, that his complaint was the *Rheumatism*, and not the Gout. That some few symptoms in both these distempers are
 alike,

alike, cannot be denied, owing to each being accompanied by flatulencies; but, in every other respect, they are as opposite as East and West: They may *possibly exist* in the same body, at the same time; but their genus and origin are so very distinct as not to admit them to blend and unite, or form, as it were, a *Mule*; and, therefore, *Rheumatick Gouts*, or *Gouty Rheumatisms*, are chimæras not to be met with in Nature; the idea leads only to error and confusion. However equivocal the appearances in these two disorders may sometimes be, a proper enquiry into the patient's manner of living will easily determine whether he can possibly

have the Gout, or not ; and in the last event, at least, we shall arrive at a certainty. Besides which, we frequently find the true, genuine Rheumatism, even among brutes. Horses, in particular, whose labour is regulated by the cruel caprice of man, are extremely subject to this distemper : But who ever heard of a Horse's having the Gout, or can think it possible he should have it, like the Rheumatism, merely from a *depravity* in the *natural juices*, and without the intervention of a foreign substance ? Till the race of Centaurs revive, these two distempers can never assimilate.

BUT

BUT it is not my design, here, to speak of the Rheumatism, any farther than to prevent it's being confounded with, or mistaken for, the Gout ; for which purpose I shall only add, that although they may sometimes meet in the same body, it must be from a concurrence of circumstances not very frequent, their first principles counteracting each other ; the same liquors which are the cause, the very *essence* of the Gout, are a *considerable*, although not an *absolute* preservative against the Rheumatism ; while hard labour, and that profuse perspiration, which in the rich and luxurious would readily carry off much gouty matter, in the peasant is too often
violently

violently checked by sudden colds and chilling dews, the most common foundation of the Rheumatism; not but that the same sudden check of perspiration, even in the gouty, (especially after a fit) may possibly occasion the Rheumatism; but if the body be at the time much charged with Gout, it more frequently terminates in a fit of the latter.

IT is not uncommon to hear a man of an arthritick habit complain, that he has *bruised* or *strained* his foot or hand, and thereby brought on the distemper: If he mean only that the bruise or strain has occasioned the Gout to come sooner to a crisis than
it

it would otherwise have done, or to be determined more particularly to that part than another, his complaint may be founded in truth; but to suppose, as many have done, that the hurt can *cause* the gouty matter, or *increase it's quantity*, is an absurdity, that with the sensible reader will need no refutation.

WHY Women are in general less afflicted with the Gout than the Men, is in some measure already accounted for. To their honour, it must be acknowledged that, one with another, they do not drink one quarter of the gouty liquors which the men do, and this alone might be a sufficient reason

son why they are many degrees less subject to the distemper than the latter; but they have other securities against it, for which they are indebted to nature, and not to their own abstinence and discretion. It is admitted, indeed, that for the most part, they use much less exercise than the men; a circumstance which, taken singly, makes greatly against them: But, on the other hand, it must be considered, that as they are intended for less labour, so their habit of body is such, that less exercise is requisite to keep them in health. They are of a moister, a laxer, and more delicate texture, than the men; have in their composition a much less proportion
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of that natural astringent acid necessary to counteract the alkaline qualities of all flesh, and which is necessary in a greater degree to the male, in order to brace him for labour, to recover the tone of the muscles after fatigue, and to resist putrefaction, the more immediate attendant on heated blood. A woman of thirty is, in these respects, nearly, but not to every purpose, of the same habit as a youth of fourteen: The result is, that in women the secretions are usually carried on with greater facility than in men, less exercise will keep their bodies free from obstructions, and their juices are better adapted to counteract the effects of

M acids

acids taken in at the stomach. Besides all which, from their office in the creation, their bodies, under different circumstances, demand very different degrees of nourishment; wherefore a peculiar method is provided in them for carrying off redundancies, of which intemperance itself may take advantage so long as that peculiarity remains: And this is the main and obvious cause why the Gout is even difficult (although not impossible) to be produced in a female till after a certain time of life; yet, for the other reasons before mentioned, they are not even then so liable to it as the men.

It

It will be asked, Cannot the Gout be procured by *eating*, as well as by *drinking*? Certainly it may, but not in the way which is usually imagined; not merely by what is called *luxurious eating*, gross meats and high fauces: These may inflame the blood, and occasion various other distempers in various constitutions; but are so far from alone occasioning the Gout, that the alkali prevailing in all animal food will even resist, or in some measure *neutralize*, the acidity of gouty liquors; and it is remarkable, that the progress of the Gout is never so rapid as in those who have lost all appetite for solids; a bottle of wine, &c. will (*cæteris*

paribus) promote the disorder in one whose stomach nauseates food, more than twice the quantity in one who at the same time digests a pound of meat. I have, indeed, spoken only of gouty *liquors*, from liquors being in fact the usual vehicle of the disorder, and not from their being the only ones in nature; the same quantity and proportion of *spirits* and *acids* taken in a *solid form* must have the same effect, although no luxury of that kind hath yet been invented to tempt mankind to the trial.

To mark more distinctly the progress of the Gout, let us consider it by way of *Debtor and Creditor*, striking
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ing a balance at three different stages of life; 30, 50, and 70. Each Account shall contain only a period of twelve months; for what is here offered being intended merely as a specimen, to shew how such an Account may be taken, the intermediate ones may be easily supplied by the imagination.

THE highest degree of the distemper which nature will bear *for any considerable time*, is set at 100; less than 20 degrees is supposed not to be *sensibly felt*.

FIRST ACCOUNT.

A.B. aged 30, to the Gout, *Dr.*

One bottle of Champaign *per* day,
for twelve months - - - 60
One bottle of Port *per* Day, for ditto 50
Three dozen of brisk strong Cyder
- in the whole twelve months;
reckoning a bottle *per* day during
the whole time as equal to 40

Dr. 114
Cr. 106

Balance to the Gout 8

Ditto,

Cr.

Fox-hunting, two days *per* week 18
Shooting on foot, two days *per* week 24
Walking six miles *per* day, on an
average, the other three days 20
Home Exercise 12
Half a pint of Small-beer, dinner
and supper - - - 3
Half a pint of Tea, morning and
evening - - - 4
Half a pint of Water, dinner and
supper - - - 5
Strength of Constitution; or the
regular secret efforts of Nature
to throw off the disorder by in-
sensible Perspiration, &c. inde-
pendent on exercise and all other
considerations, and without pro-
ducing a Crisis or Fit - - 20

106

(88)

THIS

THIS young man, therefore, at the year's end, has 8 degrees of the Gout, although too little to be felt; and if the next account were to be taken from the foot of this, the balance of 8 must be carried to the *Debtor* side. But, to avoid prolixity, the next Account is taken up after an interval of many years; during which the disorder must be supposed to have sometimes gained, and sometimes lost ground: Yet, however it may have occasionally fluctuated, experience affords few instances of it's losing upon the whole. The Second Account, therefore, begins with an increased balance of 35, in favour of the Gout.

THE

THE reader will not be over-nice in scanning the value of the several articles taken separately, the whole being intended merely as a sketch to convey a general idea. Nor let him wonder that a young man should, in twelve months, lay in a stock of Gout sufficient to destroy him; for if he drank as here supposed, and all means of carrying off it's effects were stopped, this would undoubtedly be the case.

It has been already observed, that as the distemper gains ground, the passages through which the gouty matter should escape become more and more obstructed; consequently,
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the Exercise, the Diluters, the Physick, and every other means of evacuation, gradually lose part of their effect: But, to render the Accounts more clear, the same value is continued throughout upon these articles on the *credit side*, and an allowance made for it on the *debit side*, under the name of Obstructions. The decrease in the article of Constitution, is on account of a gradual decay in the powers of Nature, and not on account of any Obstruction.

SECOND ACCOUNT.

A. B. aged 50, to the Gout, *Dr.*

Balance remaining after the last Fit	35
Obstruction in the passages	10
Pint of Champaign <i>per</i> day, for twelve months	30
Pint and a half of Port <i>per</i> day, for the same time (nearly)	38

Dr. 113
Cr. 49

Balance to the Gout 64

Ditto,

Cr.

Airing in a coach every day	1
Walking half a mile <i>per</i> day	3½
Quarter of a pint of Tea, morning and evening	2
Beer, forbid	0
Quarter of a pint of Water, dinner and supper	2½
Constitution, or imperceptible ef- forts of Nature	14
Home Exercise	2
Occasional Physick	6
Carried off by a sharp Fit	18

49

THIRD

HERE Nature, at her last effort, not being able to reduce the distemper below 100, the Patient dies.

It should be observed, that the party, as he advanced in years, drank less gouty liquor than when he was young; but the means of carrying off it's effects decreasing in a much greater proportion than did the liquor he drank, the debt accumulates to a fatal amount. What would be of little consequence at one time of life, and under some circumstances, at another time of life, and under other circumstances, is certain death.

AND

AND if this be the case, in regard to the *same* person at *different periods*, how fallacious are all arguments drawn from the comparison of *one* person with *another* ! Those who would flatter themselves, and indulge in an ill habit, are very ready to urge, that wine, &c. can never occasion the Gout ; for Jack Carbuncle has drunk two bottles of claret a day these ten years, and never had the least touch of the Gout ; while Tom Sallow seldom exceeds a bottle, and is a perfect cripple. Very probably—Jack hunts or shoots almost every day in the season, uses constant hard exercise all the year, drinks a considerable quantity of small-beer, and is naturally
of

of a strong constitution. Tom, on the contrary, leads a sedentary life, thinks any thing but wine will bring the Gout in his stomach, and is naturally of a puny constitution. And although *all* these circumstances may not concur on either side, it will be generally found, on a fair examination, by some such criterion as here laid down, that the parties could not well be affected otherwise than they were. To illustrate this, an Account shall be hereafter stated between each of these two gentlemen and the Gout.

BUT not to interrupt our present pursuit, let us, after having attended
the

the Patient through all his indiscretions to the gates of death; let us, I say, suppose him once more at the age of 50, and indebted to the Gout 35, as stated above; let us suppose that, instead of proceeding in his pernicious habits, he has determined to conquer the distemper, if possible, by gradually refraining from the liquors we object to, and by using Exercise, Diluters, &c. The Account may then stand thus.

The

The Second Account resumed, on a Plan of Reformation.

A. B. aged 50, to the Gout, <i>Dr.</i>		
Balance after the last Fit	-	35
Obstructions	-	10
Half a pint of Madeira <i>per day</i> , for twelve months; the quantity drunk being gradually lessened, till reduced to half a pint, on an average, for the whole year	-	10
		<hr/>
	<i>Dr.</i>	55
	<i>Cr.</i>	44
		<hr/>
	Balance to the Gout	11

IN this last account it appears, how surprisngly a little care to lessen the influx of gouty liquor, and to promote the evacuation of what is in the body already, will do towards a cure: Instead of a balance of 64, here is a balance of 11 only.

WHETHER this, or any of the former Accounts, be precisely according to truth, or not, is no way material; they may, at least, furnish heads of self-examination, by which a gouty patient may try his past conduct, give a tolerable guess at the state of his disorder, and safely recede, provided he does it with caution, and not too precipitately.

O

BUT

BUT having more than once used the word *Intemperance*, and considered it as the common father of all Gouts, unless I explain myself, it may be alledged, that there are a thousand instances of most *regular, temperate* men, men that never were drunk in their lives, who yet have been miserably tormented with this disorder, and died of it at last.

By *Intemperance*, then, the reader will not understand the vice of Drunkenness, but the indiscretion of drinking more Wine, &c. than the party's Constitution, and method of living, in regard to Exercise, can carry off. I have myself known
many,

many, those of a studious turn especially, who have made a practice of drinking, perhaps, a pint of Port at dinner, and as much at supper, and who could have drunk twice the quantity without danger of intoxication: Of course, they maintained the character of sober, temperate men; and yet, after some years proceeding in this custom, they have been seized with the Gout, which, increasing as usual, has, in about twenty, or five-and-twenty years, ended in death.

THAT this may appear entirely consistent with what has been already said, the reader is desired to cast his eye on the following Account, which

the aforesaid *T. Sallow*, one of those temperate, but unhappy men, has opened with the Gout. A little farther he will find a similar Account between this distemper and honest *Jack Carbuncle*, whom we will suppose to get drunk sufficiently often to have well earned the name of a sot, and who, nevertheless, defies the Gout and all it's works.

HITHERTO we have endeavoured to shew the gradual progress of the disorder, by Accounts taken for single years, with intervals to be supplied by the reader: We will now take a period of twenty years together, in order to shew briefly, and at one view,

view, the sum total, and final consequence, of proceeding long in a habit so fatal, and yet generally thought so innocent. Every article is taken at a medium: For the first five or six years the *debtor side* must be supposed considerably less than according to the average here given, and the *credit* much greater; for the last five or six years, the reverse; agreeably to the usual process of the malady.

ACCOUNT

HERE is a balance of 120 remaining, after every effort of Nature; consequently, on the plan before laid down, the patient dies.

ACCOUNT

ACCOUNT between the Gout and a *drunken*, but *active* Man, taken
for the same Time, and at the same Age.

J. CARBUNCLE, to the Gout, *Dr.*

Getting drunk thrice a week with
two bottles of Port each time.

Six bottles *per* week is equal, on
the scale, to about 43 *per ann.*

This, for 20 years, amounts to 860

A bottle *per* day, the other 4 days,
according to the same propor-
tion, is equal to about 28½ *per*
year: This, for 20 years, will
amount to - - - 570

1430

Contra,

Cr.

Hunting, Shooting, and other Ex-
ercises abroad, set at 40 *per ann.*

This, for 20 years, amounts to 800

Home Exercise (at 10 *per ann.*) 200

Tea, Water, and Small-beer, (at
12 *per ann.*) - - - 240

Occasional Physick (at 4 *per ann.*) 80

Constitution (18 *per ann.*) - - - 360

Cr. 1680

Dr. 1430

Balance against the Gout 250

It appears, by this last Account, that the drunken man, in fact, had a greater influx of gouty matter than the sober one; but his active way of life promoted it's discharge so regularly, that he never retained a quantity sufficient to give him pain. As he has no Crisis in his favour on the *credit side*, so he has no Obstructions to be allowed for on the *debit side*. The first article, of the Exercise he takes abroad, is, alone, nearly sufficient to carry off a bottle of Port *per* day, and yet is rated no higher than what the ordinary practice of a healthy, active man, will well warrant. Instead of perishing by the Gout, he has a balance of 250 in his favour;

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confe-

consequently, according to our scale, he might have drunk half a pint more *per* day, without ever feeling the least Gout; I mean, on a supposition that he continued the same Exercise, and enjoyed the same strength of Constitution.

BESIDES which, two bottles of wine poured down in a short time, so as to inebriate, in reality lodges less gouty matter in the body than the same quantity sipped in a sober way: -Nature taking alarm at all outrageous attacks, and making vigorous exertions, in various ways, to combat and repel the evil; as is notorious in the case of poisons, properly

perly so called, where the dose exceeds it's due proportion.

I HAVE contented myself with giving a negative method of curing the Gout, as being the most safe; it is, in effect, letting it depart in peace. I am confident it may be hurried off precipitately by various means; but till I have made farther experiments, I forbear pointing out any of them, lest in the hands of the unskilful they become dangerous; and there is little hope that the Faculty will condescend to adopt any thing I should propose: Besides which, whatever medicine is administered, it must go hand in hand with Temperance, or

the effect will be little else than raising a hazardous conflict in the body, assisting both parties, and feeding the flames of war.

My subject had nearly tempted me to enter into the doctrine of Acids and Alkalis; but this having been as much agitated among Philosophers and Chymists as that of a Plenum and Vacuum, and, perhaps, with much less success, I therefore suppress my Creed upon this point: Indeed it would be foreign to my purpose; this little Tract being intended not as a discussion of speculative points, in which the world will never agree, but as a rule of conduct,

duct, a friendly direction, how to steer as clear as possible of some mischiefs, which, perhaps, are not so totally unavoidable as is generally thought. A prudent man will not reject the *whole* of what is here said, because he differs in some *particulars*. If, for instance, he still thinks the Gout is *sometimes* hereditary, he will not, therefore, act as if it were *always* so; or if he think it *always* hereditary, he will not, therefore, act as if it could not be aggravated by any imprudence of his own. Where we cannot do all the benefit we wish, we must compound, and be content to do as much as we can.

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AND, as a shelter from the imputation of arrogance, in making, what some may think, a Quixote attack on the Faculty, the writer only begs leave to remind his reader, that in regard to the insufficiency of *regular practice*, in the several disorders before enumerated, he has asserted little more than what is either openly or tacitly confessed on all hands: The happy success of *irregular practice*, in some, at least, of the same disorders, is too glaring to be denied. If, then, so little knowledge is pretended to by those whose province it is to know; if so much has been fortunately taught by the mouths of babes and sucklings in science, no
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one can be justly accused of presumption, for endeavouring (though ever so unsuccessfully) to throw a light upon subjects which so greatly concern the ease, the happiness, and, indeed, the existence of mankind.

It is truly melancholy to observe, what numbers are deterred from the use of the most salutary medicines, merely because not adopted by the College. Instead of receiving a speedy cure, or at least a comfortable relief, they either sit down in despair, or fondly look for assistance where none is really promised, or can reasonably be expected. If the rules
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our Physicians prescribe to themselves will not permit them to administer new medicines of their own invention, because wanting the sanction of experience, it is the more reasonable that, in those disorders, at least, for which the College has no adequate remedies, they should adopt such as have already received that sanction, by whatever means it may have happened: And why even entire new ones should not, with proper caution, be introduced, it is hard to say. Physick, so fettered, as has before been observed, may go back, but can never advance. The number of advertised Medicines is undoubtedly

doubtedly an evil; but is, at the same time, a proof of the insufficiency of regular ones: And the evil of such advertisements does not consist so much in the remedies themselves, as in the misapplication of them. Here, then, the Physician should step in; and if the College would soften the rigour of their rules, carefully inspect into the nature and effect of all *irregular medicines* which have, by long use, gained a good repute, (especially such as are applicable to disorders hitherto deemed incurable) and naturalize those that shall stand the test, the science of Physick would daily gain ground,

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the skill of it's Professors have a larger field to display itself, and their learned *Society* better answer the noble end of it's institution.



A P P E N D I X.

ALTHOUGH it was the Writer's intention to avoid entering particularly into *medicinal* or *positive* methods of cure for the Gout, he cannot dismiss the subject without an observation or two, which, it is hoped, may be of some use, especially in critical cases, where instant relief may be requisite. And this, again, will oblige him, in some degree, to relinquish the resolution he had formed of withholding his Creed in

regard to *Acids* and *Alkalis*: Little more, however, shall be said on this head than what may be sufficient to explain the *rationale* whereon the following Practice is recommended; and which, being contrary to the most received opinions, might not improperly be rejected, if resting solely on the testimony and authority of an anonymous author.

BLEEDING, in the Gout, hath been almost universally condemned, as dangerous in the extreme: This notion is probably founded merely on speculation. It is too generally imagined, that wherever Nature is endeavouring to throw off any thing offensive,

offensive, Bleeding must necessarily check her, and be of ill consequence. It may be true in some instances, and to a certain degree; there are, however, few rules which do not admit of exceptions.

THE most general and safe criterion by which to judge when Bleeding is proper, and when not, is, with deference, submitted to be this: In all *putrid* disorders, the Plague, for instance, the Small-pox, and most others of an infectious kind, the *solids* being relaxed, and the *juices* in the capillary vessels having a tendency to stagnate and corrupt, there Bleeding may be pernicious, as rendering
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the solids still more relaxed, and giving the whole mass a stronger propensity to dissolution; but, for the same reason, in cases purely *inflammatory*, of which the *Gout* is undoubtedly one, Bleeding cannot well fail of having the most salutary effect. From the prejudices conceived against it, this operation is scarce ever attempted in the *Gout*, except in desperate cases; and yet, even under this disadvantage, I never knew it have the least bad consequence: On the contrary, have been witness to many being relieved in the last stage of this distemper, and snatched from the grave by the lancet only.

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How to judge when a disorder is of a *putrid*, and when of an *inflammatory* nature, cannot be thoroughly learned but by practice and attention. By not adverting to this distinction, in sore throats particularly, many have been lost *by* Bleeding, where the distemper was of the *former* sort, and not a few *for want of it*, where the malady was of the *latter* kind. A word or two respecting the *theory* of Putrefaction and Inflammation may not be improper.

THERE are in Nature, and particularly in the animal œconomy, two great counteracting principles; the one an *Alkali*, which, united with a
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certain degree of moisture, and assisted by the action of the air, disposes the body to *dissolution*; the other an *Acid*, by which the constituent parts are bound together, and which may therefore be called the principle of *constriction*. While these are justly proportioned, they maintain a gentle, moderate, and equable contention, thereby controuling each other's excess; and then (if no special obstruction intervene) this complicated machine duly performs all it's functions, and the animal is in full health. But when either of these principles predominate to a certain degree, Nature immediately makes a violent exertion to restore the equilibrium:

librium: During this struggle the body is truly and significantly said to be *distempered*, and the distemper is either *putrid* or *inflammatory*, as the principle of dissolution or constriction happens to prevail.

It would be presumptuous and vain to attempt following Nature through all her intricacies, but an endeavour to sketch out, although faintly and imperfectly, the outlines of her general plan, may have it's use; the reader will therefore excuse some farther conjectures on the subject, notwithstanding he may happen to differ in opinion.

THE Acid, then, we are treating of, in order to answer various ends, is of various degrees of subtilty, but so far as concerns *medical* purposes it may be sufficient to divide it into two kinds, or degrees; a grosser one being furnished by the organs of digestion from the aliment, (particularly from almost the whole tribe of vegetables) and a more refined and volatile one from the air, by means of the lungs.

THE Alkali, likewise, hath it's degrees of subtilty, and, *for the most part*, enters and leaves the body by the same channels as the Acid, but seems altogether less active, and to
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be more intimately connected with the animal substance; for when life ceases, and all fresh supplies of every kind are at once cut off, the Acid which already occupies the body gradually escapes, and leaves it more and more to the dominion of the Alkali, that is, in a state of putrefaction. Some of the more volatile Alkali, indeed, escapes likewise; but there at length remains little else, except a fixed Alkali, and a kind of neutral substance, ready in the hands of Nature, by new combinations, to take new forms.

BOTH these Acids, as well the alimentary as that drawn in by the lungs, (and of which last the air

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thrown out in respiration is in a great measure deprived) being dispersed by the blood and juices to every part of the animal system, at length, after having performed their office, evaporate through the pores, and a successive current of them is maintained to preserve and invigorate the whole mass. When the pores are suddenly shut, the *ethereal acid* in particular, whose influx is involuntary and incessant, soon overcharges the body, and, in it's effort to escape, violently agitates the humours, and thereby causes a sensible *heat*, whence we properly term the disorder *inflammatory*, the most simple state of which is no more than a common cold. On the other hand, when the Air itself is robbed

robbed of it's due portion of Acid, or too much impregnated with Alkaline Effluvia; when the lungs, which should draw in and secrete this Acid, are by any means prevented from furnishing a sufficient quantity; when the juices by which it should be conveyed throughout the body, are vitiated, or the passages themselves obstructed; in either of these cases a relaxed and moist habit supervenes, frequently attended by a *chilling* languor; the whole frame tends to corruption, and the malady is truly *putrid*.

PUTRID disorders may likewise be brought on by too great a quantity
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of Alkali taken in with the food, particularly stale and corrupt flesh; but this seldom happens, except from mere necessity: For any redundancy of the Alkali is so much more dangerous to the constitution than a redundancy of Acid, that Nature seems to have made a special provision against it. All putrified substances are, in general, loathsome; whereas an abundant Acid being an excess on the safer side, the appetite has a manifest partiality towards it, and a too great indulgence of this inclination seldom leads to any *immediate* danger, although often to chronical and lingering disorders, when long persisted in.

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It is manifest that, in regard to the cure of diseases, some distinction should be preserved between those occasioned by a want, or by a redundancy of the *alimentary Acid*, and those occasioned by the excess or deficiency of the *ethereal* one drawn in with the breath: But to pursue the subject, would lead too far from the main purport of this Essay.

It frequently happens that one animal, many days before it's death, will be in a much higher state of putrefaction than another that has been dead a month: Sheep, for instance, although feeding entirely on vegetables, are subject to a disorder
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of so putrid a kind, as to become intolerably offensive while living; their wool comes off with a touch, and the skin looks perfectly green, as if they had laid a fortnight in a ditch. This distemper often affecting only a small proportion of a flock, is certainly neither owing to any fault in the air, nor propagated by contact or infection, but proceeds from a poisonous plant, which probably vitiates the juices, rendering them unfit to pass the smaller vessels, and distribute the Acids to the several parts of the body. Swine shut up, and compelled to feed wholly on the carcases of sheep dying of this disorder, when killed, have been so highly corrupt,

corrupt, that no one could even bear to cut them up; and they have accordingly been buried entire. In this case the evil undoubtedly arose from hence, that no natural supply of Acid from the Air (which was the only source left) could be sufficient to counteract so unnatural an influx of Alkali, taken in with food totally abandoned to putrefaction. A continuation of this regimen, it will easily be imagined, leads to certain death: Yet it is well known, that many of these animals, after being reduced to this putrescent habit, have in a short time been restored to a wholesome, healthy state; partly by abstaining from what caused the disease,

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ease, but principally from having large quantities of Acids mixed with their food. It is, indeed, incredible how long an animal, well saturated with Acids before it is killed, will remain unputrified after death.

THIS doctrine will account for the great, the infallible success, of Acids and the Bark, in the cure of the Murrain; and for the noted efficacy of the Thieves Vinegar, during the Plague at Marseilles. The remedy, in the first case, is particularly recommended, as thoroughly proved, although but little known.

A DUE temperament, therefore, of opponent qualities being the first and most essential ingredient of health, it may be acceptable to a reader who has not bent his thoughts this way, to see the adverse *causes*, *effects*, and *cures*, summed up, and marshalled under their proper banners: It may, likewise, contribute to prevent remedies being misapplied, and discordant ones sent on the same expedition, where they must necessarily defeat each other.

WHEN the *Cause*, therefore, is a predominant *Alkali*—the *Effect* is a *relaxed*, *moist*, and *putrid* habit—the *Cure*, *Acids* and *Astringents*.

ON the contrary, when the *Cause* is a predominant *Acid*—the *Effect* is a *tense, dry, and inflamed habit*—the *Cure*, *Alkalis* and (occasionally) *Bleeding*.

IN applying this doctrine to the Gout, it must be expected, that if one patient in a thousand, under that disorder, should submit to bleeding, and by any accident die shortly after, poor Phlebotomy will be brought in guilty, without a hearing.

THE imagination of the attentive reader will suggest to him a whole tribe of medicines which may probably be of service in Arthritic complaints; but I stop here, for the reasons

sons already mentioned : I mean, partly because the result of my experiments on this head are not sufficiently digested ; and partly because it is seldom that, in these cases, any medicine whatever is absolutely necessary. The subject irresistibly led me to say something on Bleeding in the Gout, in order to combat prejudices which have shortened the days of hundreds, and because it sometimes happens that every other method of relief would unavoidably come too late.

BUT having entered much farther into the consideration of Acids and Alkalis than was at first intended, it
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may be necessary to explain what has been said (p. 82, 83) in regard to women having, in their composition, less of the Acid than the men. The reader, therefore, will not understand by that expression, that there is in either sex any fixed, permanent quantity; for as the humours are in a state of perpetual fluctuation and change, this Acid must vary in it's quantity according to exigencies, and be, in some degree, proportioned to the greater or less tendency which the body, under different circumstances, may have towards putrefaction. No more was meant, than that in women the *predominancy* of the Acid is not so great, for the most part;

part, as in men; for women being of a moister and laxer texture, and intended for little labour, their secretions are therefore easy, and the Acid, particularly any superfluity of it which they may occasionally take in at the stomach, passes off more freely, and with less exercise, than it would do in men, whose texture is more dry and rigid, and in whom, consequently, more labour is required to promote the discharge of any excess: Labour is their destined province, and is therefore made more peculiarly subservient and necessary to their health. This may explain, likewise, what was said, (p. 67) that *old* men have more Acid in their composition

composition than the *young* ; for their texture growing still more dry and rigid as they advance in life, in order to carry off any overcharge of Acid in them, exercise becomes necessary in a much greater degree than in young men ; and this additional exercise being requisite at an age when they are least able to take it, no wonder the ill effect of acid liquors increases so fast upon them.

BUT although many distempers may be occasioned by an excess of alimentary Acid *alone*, the reader will remember, that the *Gout* is not of the number ; for, whatever may be the reason,

reason, this cannot be generated without the aid of a concomitant *spirit*.

SOME pages have been already employed in encomiums on James's Powder, yet it may be proper to offer an explanation why this same medicine is so excellent, both in *putrid* and *inflammatory* diseases; the rather, as it is a circumstance which may seem to contradict our hypothesis. The reason, then, is apprehended to be this: That the Powder does not act *immediately* on the juices as an *alterative*, in the manner that Acids and Alkalis do, and which, therefore, are never indifferent, having always some effect,

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good or bad, but, by a happy property it possesses in a peculiar and eminent degree, it merely removes *obstructions*, and after setting the powers of Nature free, leaves the rest of the work to her direction, who then exerts her energy towards restoring the lost equilibrium, and bringing back the constitution to it's original purity, to it's first principles. This may at once account for what has been before observed, concerning the *variety of it's effects* in various cases, and for it's having *no sensible effect at all* where there is no malady, and where, consequently, Nature hath no effort to make.

THE Writer is not so partial to his hypothesis, as to imagine it is applicable to every disease. Very many, especially among those of long continuance, become so complicated, and draw after them such variety of special consequences, as not to admit of general reasoning; yet we may venture to affirm, that the primary causes of distempers are by no means so numerous and distinct as is usually supposed. One strong argument in support of the assertion is, that the same mineral spring (the bath, for instance) is a specific for a long train of disorders, as different in name and appearance as possible; the *root* of divers is therefore undoubtedly *one*,

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although the *branches* are so *many*, and spread so wide asunder. While *art* is preparing a *hundred remedies* for *one disease*, gracious *Nature* is holding out *one remedy* for a *hundred diseases*; a practice which, in a fellow-creature, the Faculty might call Quackery; but the necessity of applying to Nature in so many cases, where Art hath been tried in vain, may be a lesson of humiliation to us all. At the same time, the extensive benefits resulting from one simple process gives great reason to conclude, that if a small number of the best and most efficacious of our present medicines (in whatever hands they should be found) could be selected
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from the rest, and a very few others, by accident lost, or yet undiscovered, added to the list, it would be of infinite advantage that all the remaining mass of the *Materia Medica* should be sunk in oblivion ; but this is an object for our wishes, rather than our hopes. The very Index to a Dispensary gives an unfavourable idea of the practice of Physick, which yet is indisputably more rational and perfect among us than in any other part of the globe. In these Dispensaries we find such a legion of Medicines, (at least *authorized* by the Faculty) that it is impossible to imagine one hundredth part can be of any real service ; and, if not of service, probably in many instances quite

quite the reverse. Besides which, in one and the same Medicine there is often such a multitude of ingredients, that some of them must of necessity counteract the rest, and frustrate the design of the whole. If the object and end of Physick is *overlooked* in some instances, it is *seen double* in many more; and it may be a question, whether mankind suffer most from the *want* of *new* remedies, or from the *redundancy* of the *old*. It must, however, be acknowledged, that it would not be fair to take our estimate of Pharmacy merely from a Dispensary, the choice made by the skilful practitioner certainly obviates, in a great degree, the ill consequences
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that must otherwise result from a multitude of bad Medicines, as well as from the misapplication of good ; but still it is to be regretted that so many stumbling-blocks yet remain to be removed, and so many chasms to be filled up, in order to smoothen the paths that lead to health.

AFTER all, a thousand objections will, no doubt, occur to our theory of Acids and Alkalis ; one of the most obvious is, that Acids, instead of always acting as constringents, are well known, in many instances, to dissolve the hardest metals, &c. If this were the only objection, it might easily be answered ; but
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there are so many others behind, and the subject furnishes such endless matter for dispute, that I shall not think of launching forth into this wide ocean in so small a bark. I meant only to touch slightly on the doctrine, with a view to make it of some little use in our present medical researches; and, whether the *causes* be truly assigned, or not; yet if the *effects* and *cures* are properly connected, and can be of the least benefit to mankind; or if what has been attempted may but furnish general hints, to be improved by those who have more leisure and ability to do it than the Author, he shall esteem his labour not wholly thrown away.

F I N I S.





